

Timber & Battery | This

Name and contact details

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Paul Hughes (no affiliation) and Rohanne Udall (MRes Art: Theory and Philosophy at Central Saint Martins)

www.timberandbattery.com

The work

“There is a moment where Paul is stood next to an upright table his hand hovering just above its surface. 'This' he says and he seems to mean the table or this bit of the table and then he moves slightly and says 'this' again and he is now referring to the whole complicated situation that he and Rohanne and us watching are in. And so with seemingly not much at all they take us on a kind of journey through perception and meaning, sort of like a trip. A really small one but a trip all the same.”

- response to a previous sharing of *This* by Hamish MacPherson, choreographer and researcher.

Choreographing the gestures of sensation, investigation and thought, *This* presents two idiots introducing and exploring a pair of collapsible tables. Lost somewhere between the rigours of scientific exploration and a childish recklessness, they point, tap and gesture - gradually escalating towards the wild extremes of clattering, shaking and shouting. Body and furniture contort around one another; the minimal script, restricted to the unstable demonstratives 'this' and 'that', shifts from detail to whole, gesture to pose, position to architecture; and eventually to the emergent and fleeting relations between performer and viewer. Exploring and exhausting the possibilities of body, object, gesture and space, *This* draws together the restless and rebellious bodies of slapstick with contemporary choreographic and sculptural thought.

We would deeply appreciate this opportunity to share a work-in-progress performance of *This*, as we build towards a Spring premiere of the work - a way of (re)considering this practice in the context of liveness that it addresses, and to hear how viewers experience the work. We see this context as deeply exciting - all of our work stages a body in thought, or constructs a platform for discourse - and the notion of 'Work Processing', of forging and questioning performance in the live moment, is of deep interest to us. Our practice is one and the same time research and practice, and we deeply value artist-led platforms and peer-exchange; currently unaffiliated with any universities, we would deeply relish the chance to think, do, witness, speak, and eat with a group of peers invested in Practice-as-research.

Technical specifications

Our presentation would be 20 mins in length. *This* is ultimately intended for gallery and exhibition spaces - although we think it could work in an end-on setting in this instance, we would be keen to consider how we could fit this within the space and schedule of the day. The piece can intervene on a gathered crowd, start suddenly - the work negotiates the attention of the spectator in the moment of performance.

There is no lighting, AV or audio requirements for the work, and it needs very little technical set up - a bare space. If Chisenhale Dance Space could lend us two collapsible tables for the day with which to perform this work, that would be great - no worries though, we can source some elsewhere if needed.

Bio

Timber & Battery's playful work considers meaning and meaninglessness through oblique gestures. The collaborative practice of Rohanne Udall (b. 1990) and Paul Hughes (b. 1991), it takes place across choreographic, performance and visual arts contexts. Trained in fine art and philosophy, our practice is a meeting point between disciplines; a persistent and fidgeting enquiry that continually questions itself and the contexts it finds itself within. Our practice is sprawling - incorporating performance, sculpture, video, audio works and print - and is presented across diverse spaces (galleries, theatres, universities, festivals, publication) and disciplines (dance, visual art, academia). In the past year we have organised numerous curatorial projects in support of peers across disciplines - encouraging the exchange of knowledge and mutual support. We have developed our practice by playfully adapting and responding to whichever context we find ourselves within, but now we are also keen to start building towards longer-term projects. As such, *This* is a major new choreographic work intended for diverse spaces and audiences, which insists on the viability and vitality of our deeply interdisciplinary perspective.

Our work has been recently presented at Chisenhale Dance Space, Rich Mix, Bethnal Green Working Men's Club (all London), Forest Fringe (Edinburgh), Attenborough Arts Centre (Leicester), Summer Lodge (Nottingham), DISKURS (Gießen) and ICW (Blackpool). Conference presentations include The International Conference on Artistic Research (The Hague, 2016), Yes Conference (Applied Theatre Institute, Giessen, 2016) and Dialogues on Dance, Philosophy and Performance in the Contemporary, Neoliberal Moment (Coventry, 2017). We have been awarded residencies with New Wolsey Theatre (Ipswich 2015), Hospitalfield Arts (Arbroath, 2016) and TOP SHED (Norfolk, 2017).

Rohanne graduated from the University of Edinburgh and Edinburgh College of Art in 2014 with a Fine Art MA (Hons) History of Art and Intermedia, and currently studies MRes Art: Theory and Philosophy at Central Saint Martins; Paul holds an MA Dance Studies at University of Roehampton in 2016, and an undergraduate Philosophy degree from the University of Edinburgh in 2013.

Documentation

As yet, no documentation exists for *This*. However, you can find examples of our previous work on our website at www.timberandbattery.com.

Works with particular relevance include:

- [Meaningless Dance 13 \(Empty Gestures\)](#), 2016, stage performance, ~15mins.
- [It's Out of Our Hands](#), 2017, video, ~1mins 30sec.
- [Just One Thing On Top Of Another](#), 2017, installation, found objects.
- [The Rules of the Game](#), 2017, audio series, duration variable.